Comic, Gaming and Toy News - How To - Perez Poster

No. 1 July, 1992 $3.50 ($4.25 CAN.)

COMICS ARENA

Grand Prize Give-Away!! Autographed Original Art by Hugh Haynes!

Marvel's Punisher Artist HUGH HAYNES INTERVIEWED

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NEWSFLASH!

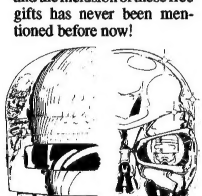
DARK HORSE INTRODUCES

THE FIRST-EVER ROBOCOP VERSUS THE TERMINATOR COMIC BOOK STAND-UP

Dark Horse Comic's publisher Mike Richardson announced that all four issues of Frank Miller and Walt Simonson's *RoboCop Versus The Terminator* series will contain full-color, card-stock stand-up versions of the famous foes.

Making their industry debut in each issue of the year's most exciting series, these two nine-inch stand-up figures are easily cut out and have foldable bases so you can stage your own RoboCop Versus The Terminator battles!

Dark Horse Comics will offer its readers an exclusive opportunity to receive these special stand-up characters in all four issues from May through August. Book price is $2.50 U.S., $3.00 Canada and the inclusion of these free gifts has never been mentioned before now!



MAYFAIR GAMES

In August and November, Mayfair will release *Who's Who #1* and *Who's Who #2*, respectively -- two unique supplements for DC Heroes role-players and DC Comics readers alike.

These sure-fire hits each contain 96 three-hole-punched character sheets that are designed to fit behind the appropriate DC character's Who's Who binder page. In addition to role-playing information and original diagrams, Mayfair's Who's Who sheets feature an appearance-to-date list for every DC Comics Character included.

Check it out!

Youngblood Extended; Adds A Fourth Issue!

As everybody is aware, Rob Liefeld's *Youngblood #1* was the best selling creator-owned comic in the industry, that is, until Spawn came along, but Youngblood left a few questions unanswered. Worry not! *Youngblood #0* will fill in those gaps and keep the fans and retailers very happy! Liefeld tells us that *Youngblood #0* will feature the origin of the Youngblood team and visually chronicle the first day on the job for the team leader, Shaft. *Youngblood #0* will ship in August and will feature...you guessed it! Trading cards! Two Youngblood trading cards!

Originally designed as a three-issue series, Youngblood will be expanded to include a fourth issue. According to Liefeld, "I want to give more meat to the characters and expand the story."

"Rob's story in Youngblood is demanding more space than he expected," says Publisher Dave Olbrich. "The only way to meet the demands of the story is to add another issue to the series." The glow-in-the-dark cover originally scheduled to appear on the cover of *Youngblood #3* will be pushed back to the fourth issue. Retailers and distributors will be given the chance, of course, to adjust their orders on *Youngblood #2, #3* and *#4*.

Also, in the Liefeld vein, you may be wondering what has become of *Extreme: The Art Of Rob Liefeld*. At this time it is being re-worked and re-designed by Liefeld's Extreme Studios. Look for the new version in August.

About the cover..

The Punisher, one of Marvel's heavy hitters for this summers "Big Guns", was pencilled by Hugh Haynes a "Big Gun" himself with the recent release of The Punisher G-Force book and many Punisher projects lined up for this year.

July - 1992
Volume 1 - No. 1

Executive Publisher/Editor
Bob Hickey

Co-Publisher
Mike Hickey

Editor
Joe Martin

Writers
Jerry Smith
Dwayne Haddix
Lisa Stevens

Design/Layouts
Cornerstone Design Group

Cover
Hugh Haynes & B. Hickey

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Editorial and Advertising Offices
264 Main St., Florence, Ky 41042

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HIDE! Here Comes The Publisher!

Welcome to our first issue of Comics Arena. The reason I said "our" first issue is because back in 1987 Comics Arena was published as a news publication in a newspaper format by Infinity Graphics. After a five year hiatus I've decided to bring Comics Arena back to fill holes in the current news information mags and periodicals. This time around instead of attempting this myself, I've decide to let a few other people in on it. I guess you can call them a staff... if you wanted to.

The key word as you've probably guessed is NEWS, because there seems to be a lack of "news" in the current publications that are coming out to newstands. News information magazines is how readers keep up with what the companies are doing, where their favorite artists are, where the book they like the most is heading and who will be doing them.

What will the future hold for Arena? We would like to cover all of the comic publishers thoroughly but some publishers haven't send press releases or bothered to return calls. We believe once they see the quality and time that was put into this publication they'll put forth the effort to see that we have their news.

Up to date interviews is high on our priority list,a sampling of professionals to be interviewed in future issues are Rick Burchett, Gary Barker, Bart Sears, Mark Bagley, Rick McCollum, Val Semeiks, and many more.

Gimmicks? Yes, even we will stoop to offering gimmicks to get new readers. In issue #2, we have a "Hybrids" poster illustrated by Neal Adams just for us, issue #3 will have a poster by Joe (The Editor) Martin showcasing Sky Comic's cast of characters! Can you believe he can draw also? When does this guy sleep? We do have openings for posters and covers. If any publisher would like to contact us, please feel free to do so.

Now the question every publisher hates to ask... because we would like to think that we are in total control of what's inside of our mags... but since you are the ones buying this publication, we must ask: **What would you like to see in Comics Arena?** Such as, more interviews, more information on comics in Hollywood (adaptations, cartoons, etc.), golden age comics, contests, etc.? Let me know and I will try my best to include the information you're looking for!

Until next time...

B.

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Hey, How about filling this page by next month!

SHHH! Here Comes The Editor!

First, there must come introductions, I know who you are. Only the most intelligent of comic fans would be so truly assertive to purchase fan magazines in order to assimilate what's going on in this industrious market. We are Comics Arena and I'm certain that you've already gathered at least that much. To quote the standard verbiage that we've used so far, we are "a new fan magazine in a comic-sized format centered around good interviews and the latest information of interest to comics and gaming fans." I guess that's really not too bad. I mean, hey, I wrote it.

Moving on ever so stealthily, let me assent that Comics Arena will always strive to offer cutting-edge information about comics, gaming, toys and anything else interesting we can obtain. Our purpose in mind and what we envision Comics Arena will be known for is good, straightforward news and not a lot of hype and blown-up sensationalism. Example? Rob Liefeld, Jim Lee and Erik Larsen...great artists all, BUT you will never see an all-Image issue of Comics Arena. You WILL see actively astute, aspiring articles, intriguing, in-depth interviews, colossal, creative columns and never-ending, narrative news. The writing will be good, too. Of course, that could be a matter of opinion.

More knowledge? Okay, let me inform you that the creative minds behind Comics Arena have been comic fans since childhood. We respect and appreciate the medium of publishing and what it takes to produce a good and memorable product. In less words...this isn't just a business, it's fun. We're as apt to get carried away as the typical, intelligent comics or gaming fan. However, that above remark about comics being a business...it's the truth. I know you know that and I'm sure that you know that I know you know that. Remember when we were little and all we had to worry about was who was really stronger...the Hulk or Thor? Who was faster...Flash or Superman? But now it's how many copies did McFarlane's Spawn sell and how many would be profitable to buy considering can we afford six or seven copies of the same issue?! I'm as guilty as the next guy.

Okay, it looks like I'm out of room here. Simply put, Comics Arena is about good comics. Hope you like it.

J. Martin

CONTRIBUTOR'S INFORMATION

Writing: Address all submissions to Comics Arena, 264 Main Street, Florence, Kentucky, 41042. Please enclose a S.A.S.E. Submissions must be typed, double spaced. Keep a copy of your manuscript. Only send copies. Always put your name, complete address, and phone number on each page of article.

Art: Address all submissions to Comics Arena, 264 Main Street, Florence, Kentucky, 41042. Send good copies of stats please. Put your name and address on the back of each piece of art. Always include an S.A.S.E. if you wish your materials returned.

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HUMOR COMICS!

Up from the Underground?

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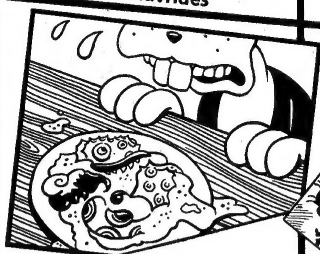

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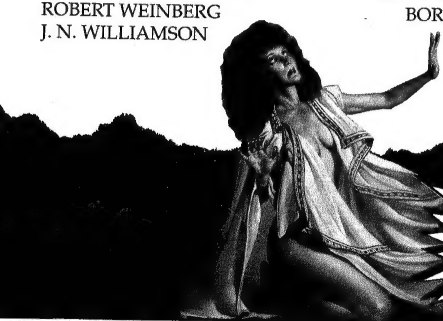
PAUL DALE ANDERSON
MORT CASTLE
STEPHEN KING
JAMES KISNER
ROBERT R. McCAMMON
WAYNE ALLEN SALLEE
ROBERT WEINBERG
J. N. WILLIAMSON

ILLUSTRATORS

OLIVIA DeBERARDINIS
MARK EVANS
DAERICK GROSS
TED NAIFEH
MIKE OKAMOTO
MATT THOMPSON
BORIS VALLEJO
TIM VIGIL



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COMIC NEWS

Mirage Publishing

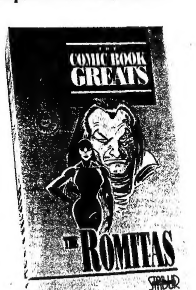
Mirage Publishing returns to its roots with issue #48 of their regular *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* series. Scheduled for this month, this issue marks the return to a story with continuity as it leads readers back to the Eastman and Laird style of storytelling. Jim Lawson, known for his daily strip and the movie adaptations for TMNT, comes on as regular penciler (except for issue #50) and Keith Aiken as regular inker. Craig Farley, known best for his covers of the Collected Books, will illustrate the covers to all issues except for #50. A new and compelling storyline begins in #48 with Splinter sending the Turtles to Springfield on a training mission to find Casey. In avoiding the Turtles, Casey runs into trouble as he is confronted by some young thugs and is drawn into a deadly fight!

Told the way the fans like it best! This is an issue not to be missed! Cowabunga!

That's not all from Mirage! Hold on because here comes *Space Usagi*. Available in June will be the first issue of a 3-part mini-series by Stan Sakai. This action-packed adventure tells the story of a distant descendant of Usagi Yojimbo who must help forge an alliance by aiding his lord in getting his son married to the princess of a neighboring feudal state. However, warring clans and space battles seem to pose a problem for our hero. Set in a space-age future and based on feudal Japan, Space Usagi has loads of incredible action, excellent writing and that imaginative anthropomorphic illustration that Stan Sakai is known for!

Stabur Home Video

Look for Stabur *Home Video's Comic Book Greats Volume #8* featuring the amazing Romitas. John Romita Senior and Junior are showcased from "Dad's" early work in commercial art to his most unprecedented stints on *Spider-Man, the Incredible Hulk and Daredevil*, to name just a meager few, to "Junior's" phenomenal success with *Punisher: The War Zone*. Stan Lee hosts as this father and son team reveal the style, secrets and techniques behind their talent.



AC Comics

AC Comics' mainstay title *Femforce* is reaching its milestone 50th issue. *Femforce #50*, specially oversized, will feature a wrap-around cover with 13 Femforce ladies pictured and a Flexidisc record of the FF theme. The "Countdown to Victory" storyline, having begun in issue #44 will conclude this issue with the new Ms. Victory facing off against the now evil Rad! The conclusion is even more tragic than imagined when one of the on-going characters dies in the struggle! Story and pencils by Bill Black and inks by Mark Heike. The inserted Flexidisc is going to make this issue particularly collectable.

Fantagraphics

Fantagraphics celebrates ten years of *Love and Rockets* with a 10-color silkscreen poster for retailers! This display poster, offered at the special price of only $5.00, is the first of many commemorative items and special events to be offered by Fantagraphics Books in celebration of this milestone. This colorful 18" x 24" print will feature the familiar cast of characters from the pages of Love and Rockets in the Hernandezes' trademark style.

COMIC NEWS

Innovation

Innovation, your new company for horror comics, has a pleasant surprise. It is called *Masques* and it is described as "elegant evil". Stories by authors Paul Dale Anderson, Mort Castle, Stephen King, James Kisner, Robert Weinberg and more are featured in this full color, perfect-bound horror anthology premiering this summer. *Masques #1* cover artwork is provided by renowned painter Boris Vallejo.

Hero Comics

Hero Comics is releasing *Flare vs. The Tigress* #1 of 2 issues this month by Dennis Mallonee and Paul Abrams. The murderously vicious Tigress returns for a rematch with Flare in a fight so big, they had to put it into two issues. Watch for a cameo by Lady Arcane and a brief appearance by the mysterious old-time hero, Microman! This issue will feature two covers - front and back - by Paul Abrams and Mark Propst! If all goes well, this will lead directly into the debut of the Tigress in her own magazine, with new stories by the same creative team.

Gauntlet Comics

Gauntlet Comics, an imprint of Caliber Press that features action and adventure titles, will release the first issue of *Krey* this summer. The series deals with a young boy who is raised by mutant tribes and his struggle on which side to take as humans and mutants go to war with each other. Written by Roland Mann, popular writer of *Cat and Mouse* and mini-series featuring the *Elementals*, and pencils are provided by Steven Butler who is known for his *Punisher* work and his new series from Marvel Comics, the hot new *Silver Sable*.

Sky Comics

Sky Comics is releasing their anthology title *Sky Comics Presents Monthly* #1 this month and it promises to be hot! From time-jumping superhumans to vengeance seeking apparitions to freedom-fighting space rogues to scholarly vampires (yes, vampires!), this title has it all. It's black and white but don't let that fool you! Great stories and fantastic artwork abound in this ongoing series by hot new artists.

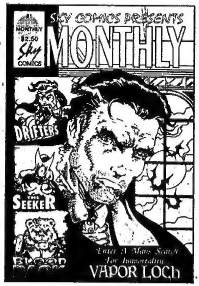


Image Comics

Image Comics' *The Savage Dragon* #1 by Erik Larsen is due out this month and here come the crossovers! Look for guest appearances by Todd McFarlane's Spawn and members of Youngblood in the first three issues. Other debut Image titles include Jim Lee's *Wild C.A.T.s: Covert Action Team* #1 and Rob Liefeld's *Brigade* #1 both due out in July and Marc Silvestri's *Cyberforce* #1 and Jim Valentino's *Shadow Hawk* #1 due to ship in August. Image...the new era in comics!

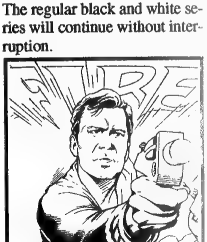
Eclipse Comics

Eclipse Comics brings you more of Truman, Alcatena and Parsons' *The Spider, Master of Men*! The pulp action returns in an all-new limited series! Horrific and violent murders are happening throughout the city and The Spider must grapple with the police as well as a menagerie of foul creatures known as the Legion of Vermin in order to dispense his own brand of vigilante justice. It's 1930's pulp and 1990's bite!

COMIC NEWS

Ninja High School

Eternity's *Ninja High School* has graduated to full color. As a show of support for its longest running creator-owned comic, Eternity Comics has announced that it will be relaunching the first five issues of *Ninja High School* in full color to tie-in with an extensive licensing program. The regular black and white series will continue without interruption.



Star Trek Fans

Star Trek fans alert! DC's long-awaited original graphic novel represents Chris Claremont and Adam Hughes's (remember Adam Hughes?) tribute to the legendary legacy of Star Trek. Star Trek: Debt of Honor follows the career of Captain Kirk as he - and he alone - realizes the entire galaxy is threatened. He assembles a covert strike team with the Enterprise alongside the Klingons and Romulans to thwart the invaders or die. Painted cover by Dave Dorman, it ships on July 7th and retails for $24.95. If that is a bit much, the logical choice would be to wait for the trade paperback edition later in 1992. Any way you go, readers will find themselves transfixed by the fine character renderings and fast-paced action sequences.

DC Brings Back Justice Society of America

The *Justice Society of America* has returned to comics! Len Strazewski and Mike Parobeck bring you the world's first superheroes except...does the world really need them? Things aren't as clear cut as before for the original Green Lantern, the original Flash, Hawkman and Hawkwoman, Wildcat, the Atom, Doctor Mid-Nite, Hourman, Sandman and Johnny Thunder. It's just not simply good vs. evil anymore. These characters, since they are much older than other DC characters, find that problem-solving entails experience and wisdom as much as it does muscle. Plans include crossovers with the other Justice League titles as well as introducing new and younger members to the team. Watch out because here comes the JSA!

Batman Fans Keep Watch!

Fantasy fans and Batman fans have something to look forward to in DC's *Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight*. Starting in issue #35 is a two-part story entitled "Destiny" by writer Mark Kneece (*Hellraiser*) and Bo Hampton (*Viking Glory: Viking Prince*). A distant predecessor of Batman, a barbarian Norse warrior takes the spotlight as a descendant of the legendary Viking Prince brings a personal war to Gotham City against the pollution spreading Valhalla operation. He is assisted by Batman in a meeting pre-ordained by ancient myth, that tells of an incarnation of Batman teamed ages ago with the original Viking Prince. Look for it!

Returns.

Batman Returns officially June 19th and on the heels of this extravaganza are the *Official Movie Souvenir Magazines* and the *Official Collector's Magazine*. Also of interest is the *Batman Returns Official Poster Magazines* #1 thru #3. The first issue features Batman, the second features the Penguin and the third is Catwoman all for just $1.95. Look for these publications in mid-July from DC!

SQP

SQP releases *Vicious Bitches!* A new portfolio by Tom Artis and Sam Delarosa! There are some new girls on the block and they don't play nice. They've got powers and abilities far beyond those of nervous men and they're not afraid to use them! A premiere portfolio featuring 7 11" x 14" black and white plates in a clear slipcase. Coming soon in their own comic...Vicious Bitches!

COOL WORLD

Ralph Bakshi's *Cool World* will be unfolding this coming July with animated and live-action characters interwoven in a world that makes Toontown look like a nursery school. Why not herald this cool event with a full color white cotton T-shirt featuring Holli Would, a dandy doodle that longs for the world of humans? This shirt comes to you in June from Graphitti Designs, as well as other shirts.

COMIC NEWS

Xenozoic Postcards

Schultz art on six Xenozoic postcards! That's right, this month look for six full color *Xenozoic Tales* postcards from Mark Schultz and Kitchen Sink Press taken from art not seen anywhere else! Two feature portraits of that luscious babe, Hannah Dundee, three show dinosaur battles and one shows Jack Tenrec being stalked by a saurian. These 4" x 6" high gloss cards are numbered 33-38 in the Kitchen Sink Press series and they retail for $1 each.

Antarctic Press

Antarctic Press proudly presents *A Traveller's Tale* #1 of a three-part mini-series. It's a mixture of Japanese Manga and a medieval storyline, introducing Goshin the Traveller as he returns to his homeland for the last time before assuming his duties. After he saves the life of an elf, he becomes entangled in a quest for an antidote to save an ailing princess, which later involves a conspiracy as well as a matter that could disturb the very balance of time! Coming this month from Antarctic, Darryl and Catherine Geil, and newcomer, Chris Alexander!

Fish Police Animated

Apple Comics' Fish Police update! The first three Fish Police animated TV episodes aired in February and March on CBS-TV and a reviewer in People magazine said Fish Police "has it all over ABC's Capitol Critters". A second group of three episodes are scheduled to air between April and June (no publicated dates as of yet). Merchandise spinoffs from Hanna-Barbera will begin appearing late spring/early summer. The producers behind the series are Benjamin Melniker and Michael Uslan, the producers of Batman and Batman Returns, among others.

Marvel's Avenger's 350th Issue!

Marvel is making the Avenger's 350th issue extra special. The guest stars alone - Professor X, Cyclops, the Starjammers, Quicksilver, Val Cooper and Guido - would please any Marvel Zombie. This issue also features a spectacular gatefold cover with art by Steve Epting and 64 pages of pulse-pounding action that just won't quit!

Moebius' Celebrates 15th Years in America

In celebration of the 15th anniversary of Moebius' introduction to America, Starwatcher Graphics and Tundra Publishing proudly present *The Arzach Gallery*, a compendium of images inspired by Jean "Moebius" Giraud's Arzach fantasy epic. The Gallery represents an elite and unique gathering of artistic talents, with such acclaimed contributors as Brian Bolland, Bill Sienkiewicz, Mike Mignola, Paul Chadwick, Rich Corben, John Bolton, Dave Gibbons, Jon J. Muth, Joe Kubert, Will Eisner, David Mazzuchelli, Katsuro Otomo, Mike Zeck, Charles Vess and more. There will be 6 volumes and each will contain an all-new Arzach short story written by Jean-Marc Lofficier and illustrated with original, unpublished artwork by Moebius along with eight full-color plates. These stories will never be reprinted so get yours this time around! The first issue ships this month from Tundra.

THE MOST AMBITIOUS PROJECT OF 1992!

COMIC NEWS

Marvel's Crossovers

Daredevil, the Punisher and Nomad...scared you, huh? Get prepared for one heckuva crossover beginning in *Daredevil #307*, followed by *Nomad #4* and then in *Punisher War Journal #45*. It's a nine-part crossover entitled Dead Man's Hand and when these three gritty heroes and almost every criminal syndicate gathers in one place this crossover will leave you reeling, but it ain't over until the fat man sings.

You want more Punisher?

Aside from the *Punisher Summer Special* by Pat Mills (who will be writing *Punisher 2099* scheduled for late 1992) and Mike McKone, Marvel's #1 gun-toting justice seeker will guest star in the *Incredible Hulk #396* by Peter David, Dale Keown and Mark Farmer. The Hulk and the Punisher must team up to defeat the menace of Mr. Frost. Plus, a painful appearance by Doc Octopus as subplots lead ever onward to the blowout 400th issue!

Swimsuit Special

Head to the beach, or the swamp? This year's *Marvel Swimsuit Special* ships this month. You're invited to the party of the year as the Black Panther celebrates his wedding engagement in his African homeland, Wakanda! See all your favorite Marvel characters scantily clad and having fun in the sun as rendered by your favorite artists.

Spirits of Vengenance!

More hard hitting HOT action from Marvel in *Spirits Of Vengeance #1* which will regularly feature John Blaze and Ghost Rider in what is believed to be the most successful team-up book in history! John Blaze, the former host of the Spirit of Vengeance, now owns the Quentin Carnival and travels the country avenging any evil he comes across and training the new Ghost Rider in the ways of his supernatural powers. Spirits is written by Howard Mackie and illustrated by Adam Kubert.

Lee's X-Men Posters!

X-Men Posters by Jim Lee. Those words are enough to make almost any comics fan pause and listen. Look for four X-cellent posters which are re-releases of the great pin-ups from *X-Men #1* (E).

Bolo Tie?

Planet Studios offers the Hearts of Darkness Skull Bolo Tie for $19.95. This bolo features the skull logo from Hearts of Darkness, starring Wolverine, Ghost Rider and the Punisher. This 2" bolo tie consists of a Punisher skull circled by the Ghost Rider's flaming corona and slashed with Wolverine's trademark signature clawmarks. Gift boxed!

COMIC NEWS

Dark Horse Brings Bond Back!

Bond is back, and Dark Horse has a license to thrill! The company that is king of licensing and bringing the movies to comics presents a new James Bond series based on the popular Ian Fleming characters! A nuclear arsenal disappears! Unexplained phenomenae in South America! Dinosaurs?! This is the first in a series of new James Bond books from Dark Horse Comics and Acme Press. Story by Doug Moench and art by Paul Gulacy.

Masamune Shirow at Dark Horse!

Masamune Shirow brings his work to Dark Horse Comics! As further evidence of its ongoing commitment to showcase the world's foremost comic talents, Dark Horse Comics and Studio Proteus have agreed to bring two new projects by Japan's master storyteller, Masamune Shirow -- creator of Appleseed, Black Magic and Dominion -- to American readers. Intron Depot, a 148 page collection of Shirow's color art, ships in August. Beginning the month after will be Orion, a six-issue cyberfantasy tour-de-force, kicking off with a 56 page first issue. A dizzying blend of cutting-edge science fiction and dark mythology, Orion is Shirow at the top of his form!

Valiant's Special Unity Offer!

This month, all Valiant universe titles will take part in the epic crossover storyline: Unity! To conclude the storyline, Valiant will be offering copies of Unity #1, the 16-page epilogue to Unity, created by Jim Shooter, Barry Winsor-Smith and Bob Layton. It's the aftermath of Unity, as each of the survivors picks up the pieces of their lives. These copies will be shipped to comic stores in limited quantities so stay sharp and keep your eyes open!

In a special offer, Diamond Comics and Valiant are offering the second special edition called The Unity Collection #2. This collects the concluding chapters of Unity: The Eternal Warrior #2, Archer & Armstrong #2, Magnus #16, X-O #8, Shadowman #5, RAI #7, Harbinger #9, Solar #13 and Unity #1. This collection features a cover by Frank Miller and is signed by Jim Shooter, Bob Layton and tentatively Frank Miller. Extremely limited is this offer! Check with your retailer for availability and price!

Doc Savage: The Devil's Thoughts

Millennium Publishing presents Doc Savage: The Devil's Thoughts #1. A young Doctor Clark Savage is about to ring in the New Year embroiled in a supernatural mystery! An ageless symbol of Shiva's might is sought by the cunning Hanoi Shan, who plans to revive an ancient evil to terrorize the world! The inexperienced Doc Savage must face this deadly predicament and deal with a bloodthirsty cult in the process! Cover by Tony (Nightbreed) Harris.

Green Hornet Button Free!

Now Comics announces The Green Hornet #12 as an Anniversary Special #1 and is available through direct market only! It includes a free full-color Green Hornet button polybagged with the comic. With the return of Mishi, the Hornet and Kato try to discover what drove her to become the Crimson Wasp! Mishi recounts her tale in an exciting, action-packed flashback featuring Johnny Dollar! Part One of Three. The Green Hornet Anniversary Special #1 is the code approved edition. It's the same story and the same button as the Direct Market version but has a different cover and is a special Collectors' #1!

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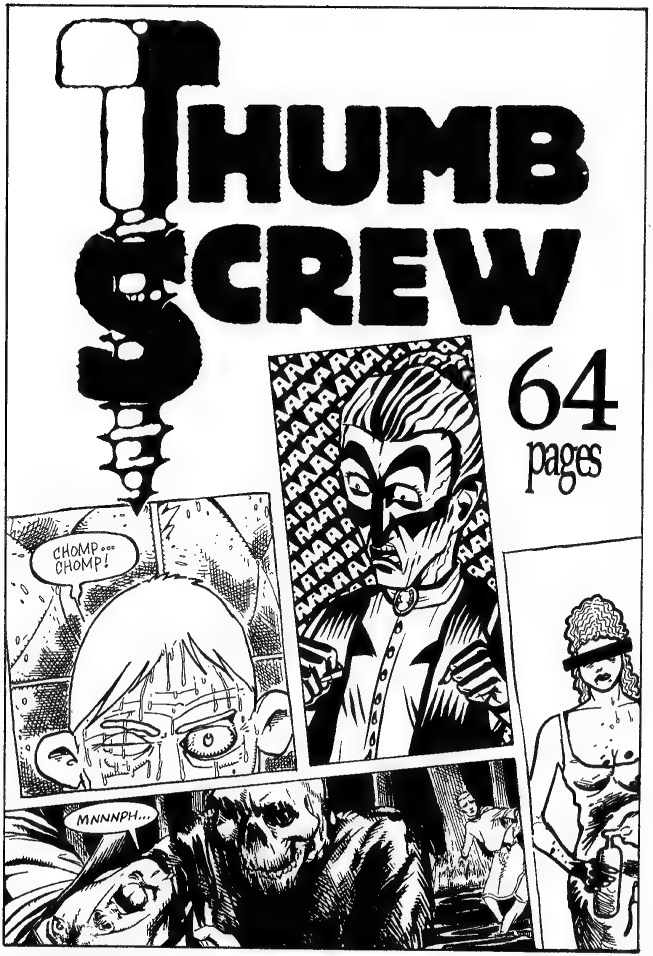

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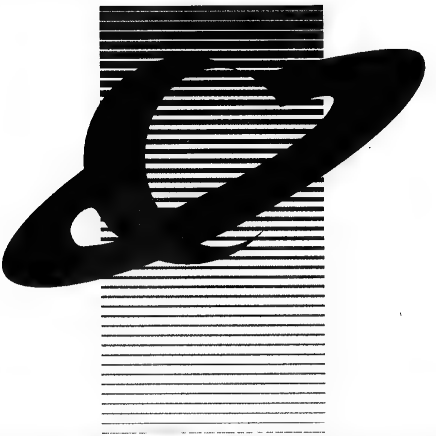

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HUGH HAYNES INTERVIEWED

This interview with Marvel's *Punisher* artist Hugh Haynes was conducted in April, 1992. Comics Arena would like to add that this particular artist is one hell of a nice guy who has yet to flash a dangerous ego in anyone's direction. The interview was speedy so that we could free Hugh up because he was expecting a visitor. A boy had read about Hugh in the paper and wrote to him just to contact the "The Guy Who Draws The Punisher" and Hugh, being the kind of guy he is, invited the boy to come over and see his studio. How many artists would bother to give this kid the time of day? Probably not very many. Onward!

CA: Alright, here's a question I'm sure every artist has been asked, Do you have any former, form...uh...

Hugh: Formal?

CA: Yeah, that's it. Thank you. Formal art training?

Hugh: Not in drawing. I have a degree in sculpture.

CA: Ah, well that's interesting. So, you're kind of winging it, eh?

Hugh: Well, yeah, I always have winged it when learning to draw.

CA: It works.

Hugh: (Laughs) Yeah. Mostly, I've learned from books, uh, Andrew Loomis' books, George Bridgman books.

CA: So, how did you get in to comics? Did you send in submissions?

Hugh: Yeah. Well, I started trying to get in to the field in 1971. I was nineteen. I made trips to New York and kind of just walked in cold back when you could do that and get away with it and I talked to whoever was around. They'd just come out in the lobby and talk to me.

CA: So, you just became a familiar face, huh?

Hugh: Yeah.

CA: If you want in that's the best way I would suppose. Just keep jumping in their face.

Hugh: Yeah, but now you've pretty much gotta do it through the mail. They won't just see anybody off the street.

CA: They've gotten big now.

Hugh: (Laughs) Right.

CA: How long ago was it that you got in?

Hugh: I didn't get in until 19...uh, 87? 86? 1987, I think it was.

CA: That was on Alpha Flight for Marvel?

Hugh: Right. I had sent in a photocopy of a complete story I had drawn, inked and written of my own character to every editor I could find at DC, Marvel, First and other companies that were around at the time. Uhm, I got one reply.

CA: One reply?

Hugh: One reply. That was Carl Potts.

CA: And he accepted you.

Hugh: Yeah. He asked if I wanted to do a fill-in for Alpha Flight and he sent me a try-out story. They send a try-out story to anyone who's new to see if you can handle it and you get paid a low rate to do it. He wasn't that impressed with the artwork on the try-out story but he was impressed with the time it took me to do it. I did a six page story in six days.

CA: So, you really jumped on it?

Hugh: Yeah. I said I would do it in that time and I did it. So, he knew I could handle deadlines and from there he pretty much took me under his wing as far as giving me clues on how to improve my artwork.

CA: Obviously, you were a fan of comics. Are you still or does being an artist limit you?

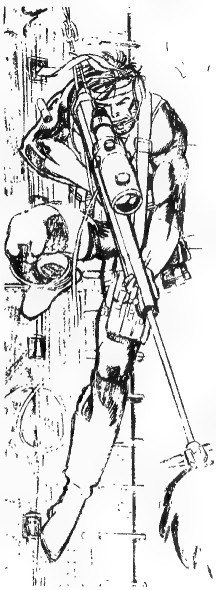
Hugh: It limits me quite a bit. It seems like it takes me two hours to do an hour's worth of work when drawing comic books. You're never satisfied with what you do. In comics, you don't have the luxury of sloughing off a day because the product ends up in print (laughs) and you don't want things to look bad.

CA: Right. It's not all fun and games, eh?

Hugh: (Laughs.)

CA: Who influenced Hugh Haynes? Who are your artistic influences?

Hugh: In comics, when I was young, it was Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko. Kirby was on Fantastic Four and Ditko was on Spider-Man. People who more currently affect my drawing style would be Barry Smith, Alan Davis, Adam Hughes, Jose Luis Garcia Lopez, George Perez...



CA: So, you're pretty widespread. That's good.

Hugh: Well, there's certain things I like about each artist so I try to pull out what I can from all of them.

CA: Who would you like to work with?

Hugh: Work with in comics?

CA: Yeah. Any writers? Inkers?

Hugh: I would like to get a good, tight inker.

CA: Randy Clark inked you rather well on some Nexus stuff.

Hugh: Right. As far as people go, I like Mark Farmer. Someone with a smooth style not a scratchy style that seems so popular these days. But that scratchy style seems to kind of be compatible with the Punisher.

CA: The gritty, dark feel...

Hugh: Gritty. Yeah. I would like to get Dennis Janke or, uh...Jerry Ordway (laughs).

CA: Slim chance, eh?

Hugh: (Laughs even more) Yeah. Yeah.

CA: How quick are you and how do you work?

Hugh: I try to do a page a

day. Often, I fall short. I try to send in five pages a week.

CA: You send them off in increments? So they can get them right off to the inker?

Hugh: Uh-huh. And I get paid quicker (laughter yet again). I usually begin with thumbnail sketches of stick figures about 1 1/2" x 2". Once the page is laid out as I want it I'll blow that up on an opaque projector to a 4" x 5" size. Then I fill in the proportions of the figures and make sure all of that is right. Then I'll blow it up again to the final page size and work on details.

CA: Interesting.

Hugh: Yeah, I've never heard of it being done that way.

CA: Your own improvisation...

Hugh: (Laughing) Yeah.

CA: What's in your future? Are you trying to devote time to other projects?

Hugh: I have as much Punisher work lined up as I can do. For the foreseeable future I'll be doing work

for Don Daley (editor of Punisher). I'm working on a three-part story that will be appearing in one of the three Punisher series. I'm not involved in the monthly series all that much anymore. I'm working on special projects so I don't know how much will hinge on character continuity. I'm working on a lot of series of stories.

CA: The character of the Punisher...how do you feel about this guy? What attracts people to this character?

Hugh: The feedback I have from people at conventions is that they really like it because it is reality-based. There could be (strained) someone like this roaming the streets shooting up criminals. What's unbelievable is that he could get away with it for so long.

CA: Some of the situations he gets in and out of with maybe scraped elbows, eh?

Hugh: The James-Bond Effect...

CA: Do you have any other creative input on the book or do you just receive the scripts and go with it?

Hugh: I receive the scripts and go with it.

CA: Tyrranical, isn't it?

Hugh: (Laughs) Well, I'm like a director getting the screenplay and interprets it but generally doesn't write the screenplay. There's control of layout and how the story is told.

CA: What do you feel is your best work so far?

Hugh: I think G-Force (deluxe format title shipped in March) is my best work so far.

CA: Have you done work you're disappointed with?

Hugh: Well, there were some issues of Nexus that were real disappointing. My fault. I tried to do it too quickly and had taken too many extra assignments and had fallen behind on my deadline and tried to rush it out in the belief that maybe the inker could tighten things up a bit. (Laughs) It doesn't happen that way.

CA: Last question, what do you do outside of comics? How do you get away from it all?

Hugh: Away from it? Uhm, my wife and I like to do something called Contra-dancing. It's traditional American country dancing circa the 1830's.

CA: Contra-dancing?

Hugh: It's something the pioneers did but we improvise a lot. Where there might be a move where you pivot with your partner we might do a jitterbug move. It involves a lot of old-time fiddle music...sort of a barn-dance feel. It's where I met my wife.

CA: Sounds like something a lot of people haven't heard of.

Hugh: Nope (Laughs).

CA: It's not square dancing. It's Contra-dancing.

Hugh: (Laughs.)

On The Punisher:

Are Three Titles Punishment Enough?

by Jerry Smith

There are two widely held opinions about Marvel's Punisher titles. Fans either condemn them as violent trash contributing to the delinquincy of minors, or praise them as a legitimate outlet for society's outrage against the criminal element. Actually, the three Punisher books are mostly well written and fun action/adventure with a rather violent twist. Is there room in the marketplace for three separate Punisher comics? Are they harmful to society? Take a brief overview of the Punisher's career and examine each title separately, then decide if Frank Castle suffers from overexposure.

The Punisher, sans real name, debuted in the pages of Amazing Spider-Man in the early seventies. Based rather strongly on Don Pendleton's Executioner novels, the Punisher was a sanitized version of Pendleton's Mack Bolan character. Both characters were Viet Nam vets (although what half-crazed, anti-social cliche character isn't these days?). Both were sharpshooters who counted high numbers of kills behind enemy lines. Bolan's prowess earned him the nickname "the Executioner" as Castle's earned him "the Punisher". Both were driven to kill mobsters and fight crime by tragedies in their familes. Both use their military skills and weapons knowledge to fight that infamous "one man war on crime".

At first, the Punisher was a poor imitation of the Executioner. Due to Comics Code limitations, the character was limited to putting thugs to "sleep" with "mercy bullets" instead of the real thing. The Punisher growled a lot, but with Code guidelines, that is about all he could do. The early Punisher black and white magazines contained much better stories, but those have become so overpriced they might never be accessible to today's fans.

The Punisher first became interesting under Frank Miller. Miller, dealing with a still restrictive but much lighter version of the Comics Code, was mostly responsible for turning the character into the happy, murdering maniac we all know today. Guest starring often in Miller's Daredevil, Miller used the Punisher to contrast Daredevil's idealistic attitudes about life and crime control. While Daredevil tended to drone on about criminal rights and due process, Punisher would just show up with an M-16 and blow said criminal into a thousand pieces. Even then these early 1980's stories stretched the comics medium and the Comics Code. This brutal, murdering Punisher, immortalized by Miller's unforgettable writing, opened the door for all the hard edged characters to come, as well as the later works of Miller himself.

The Punisher was finally changing into an interesting, well developed character, not just a second stringer. Unfortunately, Miller considered the Punisher expendible and changed his mental state to truly sociopathic. In one issue of Daredevil, he lost his mind and started shooting jaywalkers for their "crimes".

For years after that, the Punisher dwelled in Marvel limbo, home of Brother Voodoo, Herbie the Robot, the Human Fly, and until recently, the Ghost Rider and Dracula. Steven Grant and Mike Zeck changed all that however, with a little thing called the Punisher mini-series, now worth about a million dollars.

Aside from Mike Baron, Steven Grant is the writer credited with bringing the Punisher into his own. Grant invented a plausible reason for the Punisher's psychosis. He gave the character a name, Frank Castle. Along with Mike Zeck's breathtaking art, Grant's storytelling made the mini-series sell with guns blazing. Soon after the monumental success of the mini, a Punisher ongoing series was announced, with creative genius Mike Baron at the helm.

More than any other person, Mike Baron should be credited with the phenomenal popularity of the Punisher. Baron's witty, adventurous scripts push the boundaries of the comics medium, just as Miller's did a decade before. The language, the violence, the audacity of Baron's work display an "in-your-face" Punisher. Under Baron, Frank Castle is a cold warrior without much compassion or warmth. In Baron's stay on the book, Castle has dealt death with every type of weapon imaginable, fought Dr. Doom, consorted with the devil himself and even been surgically changed into a black man. Plus, these situations have been, within their own internal logic, believable and interesting. Not many Marvel comics can claim to be consistently good as long as The Punisher has.

Artwork by Hugh Haynes

Which brings us to the question, are three Punisher titles too many? Like any other comic title, it all depends on the writer and artist of that particular book. Four Superman books are not too many. Three Batman books and a fourth to be released soon are too many. In the Punisher's case, there does not seem to be a lapse in quality so far. Marvel hasn't broken down and told us yet, but it seems Mike Baron is either leaving or drastically reducing his role on the title he helped

Artwork by Hugh Haynes

sell so well for Marvel, The Punisher. For the last few months, he has been listed as plotter only. The Punisher's War Journal, originally promoted as a book which would cross over more with the established Marvel Universe, soon broke from this idea and became a regular Punisher action book, none the worse for wear. Recently the book showcases one-issue, heavy action oriented tales, mostly by Chuck Dixon. While it could use better art, Dixon does a great job capturing Baron's cold, violent warrior persona for Frank Castle.

It remains to be seen whether the newest Punisher book, *Punisher: War Zone*, will be as successful as the other two. P:WZ will consist of various length story arcs by, Marvel promises, "top creators". The first arc, by Chuck Dixon and John Romita Jr. features a slightly different look at the Punisher, physically and mentally. While this first story arc in War Zone, about the Punisher joining the mob under cover, works extremely well, it's tough to keep up the quality on three monthly books about the same character. Just ask Denny O'Neil.

Are the Punisher books a danger to the kids who read them? Of course not. Punisher readers aren't any more likely to take an SKS assault rifle and stake out muggers than Superman readers are to take a running leap out of a seventh story window, or Dirty Harry fans are to "make someone's day". If someone should emulate the actions of their hero to such a degree, there's something wrong with them that wasn't caused by reading too many comics. It's true that the Punisher books aren't Politically Correct, but that just adds to their attraction.

The Punisher is the type of hero that you either love or you hate.

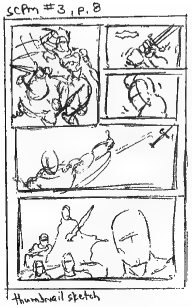
Those who hate the character are missing out on action writing done by some of the best in the business. As long as the quality doesn't suffer by having so much product on the market, the Punisher will be a winner. And he'll probably be punishing bad guys long after that.

BLUE LINE PRESENTS

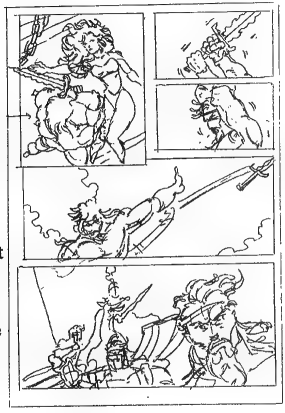
HOW TO...

Chapter 1

Page Layout



To begin production on a comic book page the first thing you will need is a script from which to work. Once that is acquired, interpretation is up to you. Will Eisner explains that "the sequential artist 'sees' for the reader because it is inherent to narrative art that the requirement on the viewer is not so much analysis as recognition. The task then is to arrange the sequence of events (or pictures) so as to bridge the gaps in action." With that in mind, look over what the writer has depicted should be presented and decide what kind of layout works. It is necessary for many artists to make a thumbnail sketch, maybe 3" x 5". Size of thumbnails is not incredibly important except that it should resemble the larger scale of a 10" x 15" page.



In order to create an effective layout, you must decide what elements are vital to the narration, perspective of each panel and what is to be included in each and every frame. Components to be taken into consideration is emotion, mood, atmosphere, insight and timing. It sounds like a lot to think about. But, intuition is a given trait to most artists and will serve you well enough and, as time progresses, experience will aid you, also.

Decide how many panels you need. Decide what size and shape they will assume in order to contain the art and you should have an idea what the page is going to look like. Does it tell the story effectively? Is the action powerful or is the mood established? Does the readers' eyes flow? If so, you're ready to begin.

In the second issue of Comics Arena, we'll look at How To, Chapter 2...Pencils.
Join us.

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INTERVIEWS - RELEASES - ARTICLES
COMICS - GAMING - TOYS

Of Werewolves and Musclemen

Continuity Comics has a special project in the works. Jorge Zaffino, widely known in the United States for his Punisher graphic novels, The 'Nam covers and the upcoming Terror Inc. series from Marvel, has started pencilling on a Megalith Graphic Novel. The 64 page story involves Continuity's resident strongman, Megalith, being transformed into a werewolf!

CA: "First of all, what kind of format will this be released in?"

Kris Adams (VP and Associate Publisher): "This project justifies a higher quality format, but we are very concerned about it being accessible to every kid who loves Megalith. The graphic novel will be offered again in softcover format and I'm considering printing it in sections in our anthology title, Echo of Futurepast. The artist of this project, Jorge Zaffino, is extremely popular in Europe so we'll probably sell it overseas as well."

CA: "Jorge Zaffino's work is recognized most easily by his harsh blacks, gritty faces, powerful action and his style will bring a completely different view of Continuity's muscled hero."

Neal Adams (Publisher of Continuity Comics): "Yeah, he's an artist that is so far away from my own style, but there is such a high level of quality within every panel that you can't help but love it. If anyone even hints that this project is anywhere near my style, they're crazy. His Megalith is different from my own but it's excellent. He captures the youth and strength of Joe Majurac (Megalith), while also creating a vastly different interpretation of a werewolf."

CA: "The story was originally written with Mark Texeira in mind as penciler but we hear that scheduling problems forced Tex to decline from the project.

Peter Stone (writer): "Right...but I held onto the story, waiting for the right artist. As I had always been a fan of Zaffino's art, I sug-

gested his name in one of our story conferences... imagine my utter shock when Zaffino agreed to do it...without even seeing the script!"

CA: "Sounds great!"

Stone: "Yeah! I grabbed the last half of the script and rewrote the majority of it...like the conclusion, which now takes place on the rooftops of Manhattan at night in the snow."

CA: "So those who are familiar with Zaffino's work are probably salivating in anticipation, imagining the sharp blacks of the buildings against the whites of the snow and the gritty close-ups of Megalith as he struggles against a Zaffino werewolf."

Stone: "He practically attacks the page with a brush and white paint. He's so...basic. He's mostly been drawing normal humans and making them look evil and cruel...I just gave him a chance to push the outer limits of what he does naturally. He's managed to combine all that we love about the werewolf, you know the 1950's looking werewolf, and the more animalistic style like in American Werewolf in London."

CA: "We can't wait!"

The Zaffino Werewolf project is only one of a series of excellent projects that Continuity is announcing and working on. From Dwayne Turner pencilling Ms. Mystic to special covers to CyberRad to a new superhero title called The Hybrids to a revamping of Urth 4. Each title is unique and has a different artistic look. The only theme that runs through every title is a dedication of the highest quality possible. Some of the best artists in the industry have worked for Continuity over the years and with their books finally on a regular schedule, the fans should expect to see a great deal of excellent comics from the self-titled "Other Superhero Company".

MORRIGAN WARS

HERO GRAPHICS SIX-PART CROSSOVER

Flare and the League of Champions meet the Southern Knights!

One of the better-kept secrets in comics is that during the course of the past five years some of the best superhero comics on the market haven't been published by Marvel and they haven't been published by DC. They've been published by a little company based in Long Beach, California.

They've been published by Hero Graphics.

From the innovative romantic heroism of FLARE to the classic science-fiction adventures of ETERNITY SMITH, from the LEAGUE OF CHAMPIONS to Roy & Dann Thomas's CAPTAIN THUNDER, Hero has consistently produced comic books using an approach subtly different from most of the stuff produced by the Big Two. For Hero Graphics, the emphasis has always been on characterization and story, on respect for the intelligence of the reader, and on the notion that comic books, no matter how serious they get, should always contain an element of fun.

Now, this summer, the secret will be coming out for the first time in a big way as fan-favorite GEORGE PEREZ comes on board for a six-part crossover adventure in which Hero's most popular characters, FLARE and THE LEAGUE OF CHAMPIONS meet the Comics Interview Group's SOUTHERN KNIGHTS. The crossover begins in July, and continues through September, running simultaneously in all three titles. George will be doing finished art over the pencils of six different Hero Graphics contributors, including League of Champions artist Howard Simpson, Icicle artist Lou Manna, Flare Adventures artist Howard Bender, Sparkplug artist Scott Clark, Britannia artist Gordon Purcell, and Flare artist Mark Propst.

The six-part story, which begins in *League of Champions #5* and *Southern Knights #35*, brings Flare, the League of Champions, and the Southern Knights together to confront the threat of the Celtic goddess Morrigan. What follows, in *Flare #8*, *League of Champions #6*, and *Southern Knights #36*, is a quest through time, as the teams are split into three groups and trapped in three different alternate realities. Finally, in the double-sized *Flare #9*, it all comes together for the final showdown.

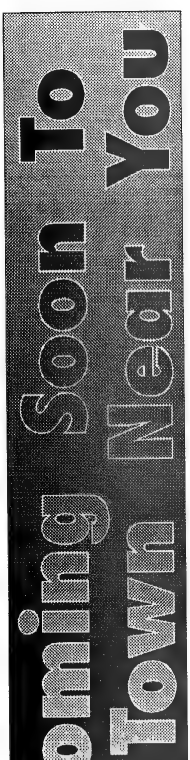
Of particular interest to fans of the League of Champions and the Southern Knights will be the three middle issues, in which the various members of the teams will have their first opportunities to play off against each other. The story in *Flare #8* features Flare, Icicle, and Dragon working together to find a way to escape from the 18th century. The story in *League of Champions #6* features Electrode, Connie Ronin, and Icestar caught in a 20th century world that's very different from the one they know. The story in *Southern Knights #36* will feature the Marksman, Aramis Merrow, and Kristin Austin trapped in a world of the 21st century that will seem awefully familiar to fans who have read the adventures of Eternity Smith.

THE MORRIGAN WARS begins in July in a six-part adventure from Hero Graphics, George Perez, and the Comics Interview Group. Watch for the Perez cover artwork featured on the poster insert in this issue of Comics Arena.

PREVIEW

HERO GRAPHIC'S MORRIGAN WARS

"KNOW WHO," SHE DEMANDS. "IF THIS IS ONE WHO HAS DISRUPTED MY MEDITATIONS!"
"IT JUST DO," HE REPLIES. "BUT I DO WELL ENOUGH NOW TO BE AMUSING
YOU'D BETTER!
RIGHT AND I'M THE MAN FOR THE JOB. I AM THE CHAOSIAN BARON! I'M READY FOR CONFRONTATION!
SO YOU KNOW NOW WHO I AM, AND WHAT I CAN DO. IF YOU DON'T LEAVE IMMEDIATELY, I'LL SEND YOU LOOSE TO TAKE THE HAND TO WIN!
AS LONG AS YOU'RE ON THIS ISLAND.
BUT YOU DON'T HAVE A CHOICE.
FORGET THE HINTS, I'M GOING TO GO DOWN THERE AND BREAK SOME HEADS!
"SUD DOUBT."
"SUD DOUBT."
"SUD DOUBT."



June 5,6,7

New York Ramada Hotel - 33rd and 7th Ave.

June 7

Houston Sheraton Grand - Westheimer exit off I-610 Near Galleria.

June 7

RON LIM

Los Angeles Airport Marina Hotel - 8601 Lincoln Blvd.

June 7

Chicago Hyatt Regency Woodfield - 1800 East Golf Rd. Off Rt. 53N.

June 7

DAVE SIM, GERHARD

Minneapolis Marriott Bloomington - I-494 at Cedar Ave.

June 13

STEVE MONTANO

New Haven Park Plaza Hotel - 155 Templest.

June 14

HANNIBAL KING

Boston 57 Park Plaza Hotel - 200 Stuart St.

June 14

PAT BRODERICK

Denver Holiday Inn I-70 at Chambers Rd.

June 14

Springfield Holiday Inn - 304 Rt. 22 West

June 14

Sacramento Holiday Inn - J St. Exit off I-5

June 20

Philadelphia Dity Line Holiday Inn - City Ave. at Exit 33.

June 21

Mt. Laurel Budget Motor Lodge - Rt. 73 & Fellowship Rd.

June 21

Albany Holiday Inn - 205 Wolf Rd.

June 21

SCOTT LOBDELL, JUNE BRIGMAN, ROY RICHARDSON, HOWARD BENDER

Pittsburgh Sheraton - At Station Square

June 21

Washington DC Ramada Hotel - Exit 10A off at 495

June 27

Nashville Ramada Inn - Exit 78 off I-65

June 27, 28

San Francisco Holiday Inn - 1500 Van Ness Ave.

June 28

ROY THOMAS

Miami Park Plaza Hotel - Palmetto Exp. & NW.

June 28

Wayne Ramada Inn - Rt. 46 West.

If you would like to have your convention listed, please send your dates and a list of guests that may be appearing and we will run them in our next con-list. Remember, our production is three months in advance (example; for July's issue, we would need July's dates by May 1st).

Comics Arena Con-List
264 Main Street
Florence, Kentucky 41042

COMICS NOW

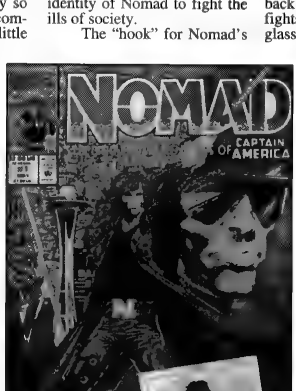
by Jerry Smith

Welcome to the first installment of Comics Now, a column in which I hope to interest readers in comics they might not normally pick up, or avoid storylines that turn out to be a massive waste of time and money. Let's face it, as descriminating comic readers on a budget, we all have only so much money to spend on comics. Perhaps knowing a little about certain titles will help us make informed decisions on how best to spend our money. I don't pretend to read every comic on the market, but my tastes are eclectic enough to include at least one title in a genre everyone enjoys, from superheroes to such realistic comics as Kings In Disguise. A quick warning though: all opinions are guaranteed to be subjective and brutally honest.

As the second toughest guy in the Marvel Universe, Nomad has turned into a suprisingly strong character in his own right. The book is called Nomad, an unlimited series about the Captain America supporting character, Jack Monroe. I couldn't decide if writer Fabian Nicieza was a talented storyteller or not based on his work in the mutant books, it really could have gone either way. Nomad has pushed the scale over to the talented side, the book is Nicieza's best work.

Nomad is Jack Monroe, part of a government experiment in the 1950's to recreate Captain America and Bucky with the Super Soldier Serum (you'd think after so many failed experiments, the nasty ol' government would give up on Super Soldier experiments). Monroe was chosen as the Bucky replacement. The experiment failed, and the new serum had the effect of making the new Cap and Bucky a bit—unstable. They were put into suspended animation in the 50's, but escaped in time to fight the real Captain America and his then partner, the Falcon. Monroe tried to go straight, and sought out Steve Rogers to help him adjust to life in the turbulent '80's. Monroe decided crime was worse than ever in his new decade and adopted Rogers' old identity of Nomad to fight the ills of society.

The "hook" for Nomad's



ongoing series, continued from his successful mini-series, is that Nomad, like his name, is a man without a home. He has nothing to anchor him, so he travels the backroads of America to find adventure and usually trouble. Another hook of this book is that Jack Monroe, Nomad, is totally crazy.

Nomad isn't froth-at-the-mouth, my-dog-told-me-Captain-America-is-the-Anti-Christ crazy (but come to think of it, he's probably not too far from it), he's more of a just-not-right-in-the-head crazy. In the Nomad mini-series, Monroe takes a baby from a crack addicted mother and decides the child would be better off if he raised it himself. He carries the child in a backpack, dresses it in a mask and tights, and calls it "Bucky" (which, I suppose, if you are totally insane, makes perfect sense). He carries the baby on his back through numerous shotgun fights, bar brawls, broken plate glass windows, etc. I thought Batman was a child endangerer, but Nomad makes Bruce Wayne look responsible. Anyone who would risk a child's life like that should be locked away permanantly. Believe it or not, despite the fact that Monroe is insane, or maybe because of it, Nomad is a very entertaining and well written book.

Fabian Nicieza, as I previously noted, has become an intelligent and innovative writer. He has taken Nomad all over the United States, taking on big business, rednecks, and drug dealers. In issue #2, he battled a good ol' boy network that called itself the "Road Kill Club". The group prided itself on running down defenseless animals with their trucks and making their town "road kill capital of the world". Nomad taught them the error of their ways in a suprise ending so shocking I still can't believe I saw it in a Marvel comic. Even Marvel's #1 tough guy, the Punisher, has never dealt justice so harshly or coldly.

I give major credit to Nicieza and penciller and inker S. Clarke Hawbaker and Mark McKenna for making a total psychotic interesting enough to keep me reading and enjoying the title. Not too many protagonists (I avoid the word "hero", as Nomad himself would probably agree) are mentally unbalanced and fun to read about. Nomad is an action packed, fun book. One of the best new books from Marvel.

One of my favorite pulp action heroes of all time is Edgar Rice Burrough's Tarzan of the Apes. Still is. I grew up with Tarzan, and I'm obliged to say I'm a mite touchy when people other than Burroughs mess with the concept and the character. There have been a slew of Tarzan rip-offs, from Marvel's Ka-Zar to the animated Saturday morning comedy George of the Jungle. Even the movies made about Tarzan, while moderately entertaining, were not about the character created by Burroughs. Filmmakers have forgotten that Burroughs' Tarzan was a product of two worlds; the jungle and the city. He was a savage, a gentleman, a pilot, and a multilinguist. He was noble and honorable, yet not above killing his enemies brutally if they threatened him or his loved ones. Jane, his mate, was a beautiful, adventurous partner, hardly a damsel in distress.

This being said, I'm not sure exactly what to make of Malibu Comics' new series, *Tarzan the Warrior. Issue #1*, the only one I have seen so far, starts out with a person I assume to be Tarzan rescuing a gorilla that has been hit by a truck (is it me, or has this road kill theme become a little too pervasive in comics?). The time is the present. Jane (?) rides up in a truck and they put the gorilla in the back and drive off. The police chase them for some reason. Jane pulls down an alley, and in the middle of the alley, the truck is displaced onto some sort of alien dimension, complete with spaceships and exotic aliens. Tarzan saves the life of an alien princess and agrees to help her on a quest for something.

Meanwhile, back on Earth, a mysterious stranger tries to kidnap a bearded old man the stranger claims is Lord Greystoke, Tarzan of the Apes. Huh?

Written by Mark Wheatly and pencilled by Neil Vokes, the premier issue of *Tarzan the Warrior* was much too confusing. Why is Tarzan displaced to the 90's? When DC did this with two other pulp characters, Doc Savage and the Shadow, not only did I not care for it, both attempts failed miserably. When you move a character out of the time frame where he was created and established, you leave in the past the very things that made him special. I don't know if this will be the case with this Tarzan yet, but I hope it won't.

The science fiction elements in the story seemed totally out of place. Burroughs often put sf elements in his work, but Tarzan doesn't mix well with Martians.

According to their press release, Malibu has many new Tarzan projects in the works, by different creative teams, all promising to show different sides of Tarzan, from the traditional to the totally unexpected. It might have been a better idea to start out with a more traditional Tarzan tale and have worked up to this "Tarzan in the 90's in outer space" thing. *Tarzan the Warrior* is confusing and a little disappointing to a Burroughs enthusiast like myself. If the confusion is cleared up to the reader's satisfaction as the series progresses, fine, it deserves that chance. If not, I do look forward to other creative teams approach to the jungle king. If you love the original tales of Tarzan of the Apes, pick up *Tarzan the Warrior*, for novelty's sake if nothing else. Besides, it might just get better.

FRANK MILLER TALKS!

SPIDER-MAN VS. BATMAN!

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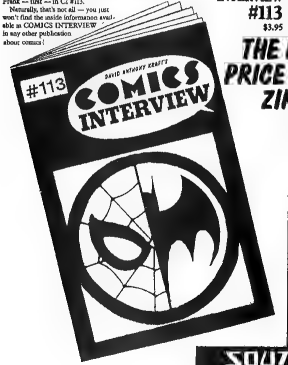
British writer ALAN GRANT (BATMAN VS. DREDD) delivers — with art by NORM/BREYFOGLE and awesome fully-painted covers by auteur BRIAN STELFREEZE!

Find out what's happening first in INTERVIEW #114



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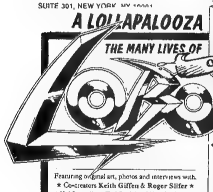
AUGUST 1992 SHIPPING

A LOLLAPALOOZA



Featuring original art, photos and interviews with:
* Co-creators Keith Giffen & Roger Slifer *
* Val Semeiks * Tod Smith * Mike DeCarlo *
* Simon Bisley * Alan Grant * MORE! *

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A COMICS INTERVIEW
SUPER SPECIAL PAPERBACK

JERRY'S TOP 10 REASONS

After his performance in Batman, 10 people who would make a better Batman than Michael Keaton in Batman Returns:

10. Bobby Hickey (Hey, he's got the build)
9. Jim Lee (hey, he's got the image)
8. Jimmy Stewart (okay, so we needed to fill the space)
7. Jack Palance (he can do more one-armed push-ups)
6. Pee-Wee Herman ("you"re a criminal, but what am I!?")
5. John Goodman ("No, I'm not Santa Claus...I'm Batman.")
4. Rosanne Arnold (she could improv and sing the badguys to death!)
3. Carlton your Doorman ("I'm sorry, Mr. Jefferson...but I'm afraid you've been laundering."
2. Ricardo Montalban (at least he's got the chest)
1. Christopher Reeve (nah, he's not typecast for life)

ORIGINAL ART GIVEAWAY!

If you would like a piece of original artwork from Hugh Haynes, our feature artist in this fabulous issue of Comics Arena, this is what you gotta do...

ANSWER these questions:

1) What was the first title that Hugh pencilled for Marvel?
2) What title did Hugh draw for the now defunct First Comics?
3) What is Contra-Dancing?

WRITE down your answers on something...anything...and SEND your answers to:

ORIGINAL ART GIVEAWAY
c/o Comics Arena
264 Main Street
Florence, KY 41042

All correct entries will be placed in a fishbowl or something and the first one drawn out by our publisher will win an original piece of autographed artwork from Mr. Haynes himself. Two others who are drawn will receive an autographed copy of Punisher: G-Force #1. Five more after that are gonna get issues #3-#6 of Comics Arena mailed to their house for FREE! Deadline is August 13th, 1992 and the drawing is on August 14th. Winners will be listed in Comics Arena #3. Send now!

ENTER NOW!!!

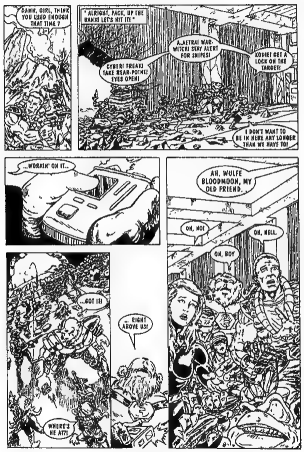
PREVIEW

SKY COMICS PRESENTS MONTHLY

WHO DARES INTRUDE INTO MY REALM!!
WE DARE, MIGHTY KRONOS, HERALDS OF THE TIME-LORD... WE ARE THE ROTHYRIA!
WE ARE OF THOSE WHO HAVE PLEDGED TO SERVE THE TIME-TRACE DUNTHEVOR!
...AND WE'RE LOOKING FOR HIM AND HOLLISTER'S MOM, TIMESTOPPER, TO GIVE JURGEN SO ARCHER!
HELLO, CHILDREN!
YOU CALLED?
I UNDERSTAND THAT BRIDAL BLADE AND THE OMNI-DEVICE HAVE DISAPPEARED. THIS SHOULD BE A SERIOUS MATTER...
I WILL SEND YOU TO WHERE HE IS AND YOU MUST DO WHATEVER IS NECESSARY TO RECOVER THE WEAPONS!

I'M COMING FOR YOU, HOLLISTER!
I AM THE SEEKER!
I AM VENGEANCE!!!
CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE! TAKE TO JURY THE BLOODBATH, KEEP A LOOK OUT NEXT MONTH TO SEE THE SEEKER IN ACTION! IT AIN'T PRETTY.

BASED ON A CHARACTER CREATED BY JOE MARTIN & BOB RICKEY
VAPOR LOCh
STORY AND ART DAVID HACK. CO-PLOT JOE MARTIN LETTERS WARD LEROC


DAMN, GIRL, THINK YOU COULD FATTEN THAT THIN?
"AIRBASE FACE, OF THE MARIE LOYD HIT IT!
AJAITAI WAR-WITCH! SEXY ALIEN! FOR SHIPS!!
ZZOOT! FREAKS TAKE BRAIN-PSYCHIC TYPE ONES!
ZOOMY GOT A LOCK ON THE ZOMBIES!
IT DOESN'T WANT TO BE IN HERE ANY LONGER THAN WE HAVE TO!
...WORKIN' ON IT...
AH, WOLFE BLOODHORN, MY OLD FRIEND!
OH, NO!
OH, HELL.
OH, GOD.
...GOT IT!
FIGHT! ABOVE US!
WHERE'S MY ASS?

Great Reading

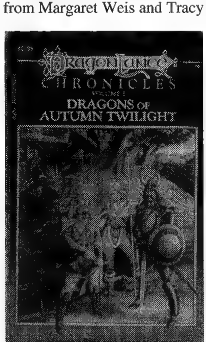
First of all, this being the very first issue of Comics Arena, I'll let the reader be aware of exactly who I am and what I'm doing. I am The Editor. Wow, that sounds kind of powerful, eh? Also, when I'm not bogged down by whatever else I do (saving the galaxy from certain and inevitable doom and such), I'm going to attempt to enlighten whosoever may peruse these pages with words of wisdom, albeit subject matter will be veritably random.

In addition to being an aspiring artist, I love to write. I grew up writing all kinds of short stories, fiction and fantasy related, and even attempted to write a couple of fantasy novels. Between school, sports and drawing, I only got about halfway finished and then was forced to put these projects on the backburner for now (now being about the last four or five years).

Okay, this column wasn't entitled "Great Reading" just because I wrote it. Yes, I do have a purpose in mind. As this is decoded, one must bear in mind that the views expressed herein are the objective views of the contributing writer, as is the matter-of-course for all articles and columns situated within and throughout.

To begin, the broad focus of this month's column is great reading from TSR, Inc., the leading fantasy and science fiction game manufacturer. Most people are aware that TSR now produces novels, also. If not, that someone is missing something spectacular. If so, then it is known what I'm spouting off about. Keep reading anyway because I really am an enjoyable person whom people may come to love if they become a loyal fanatic of Comics Arena (which you should).

In 1984, we saw the debut of the Dragonlance Chronicles from Margaret Weis and Tracy



Hickman. Volume 1 was enscribed the *Dragons of Autumn Twilight* and it brought a whole new era of enjoyment to gamers such as myself. I was only 14 years old at the time and I just about flipped out when I read this stuff. It was great! Anyway, the Dragonlance Chronicles was a trilogy that was later expanded into other series of trilogies such as the Dragonlance Legends, Dragonlance Tales, Dragonlance Heroes and Dragonlance Preludes. Now, for pure reading enjoyment, I suggest the Chronicles and Legends trilogies because these are truly Weis and Hickman works and, in my opinion, the world of Dragonlance belongs to this dynamic duo. Although I did very much enjoy Michael Williams' Weasel's Luck (Dragonlance Heroes, Vol. 3).

What is Dragonlance? Perhaps it is best explained by what was written on the back of the very first novel, *Dragons of Autumn Twilight*;

"Dragons. Creatures of legend. Stories told to children.

"But now dragons have returned to Krynn. The darkness of war and destruction threatens to engulf the land.

"Then hope appears - a blue crystal staff in the hands of a beautiful barbarian woman. The promise of hope, as fleeting as smoke upon the autumn wind, forces a group of long-time friends into the unlikely role of heroes.

"Knight and barbarian, warrior and half-elf, dwarf and kender and dark-souled mage; they begin a perilous quest for -

"the legendary Dragonlance."

As Kevin Costner put it in Robin Hood, "And so it begins".

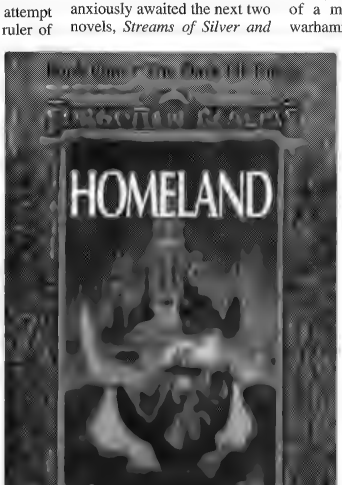
Of course, Dragonlance isn't the only world that has been novelized by TSR. There is Athas, world of Dark Sun. The Dark Sun game world, released in 1991, is TSR's newest exciting world. TSR has already claimed that Dark Sun will be the focus of their promotions for 1992. This near planetary wasteland has been ruled for thousands of years by power-mad

sorcerer-kings. The cities have become vile centers of slavery and corruption. Only heroes of great strength can stand against these despotic overlords. The *Prism Pentad* novel series is such a tale.

In the first book, *The Verdant Passage* by Troy Denning, a gladiator named Rikus and his allies, Agis and Sadira, attempt to destroy the corrupt ruler of Tyr. In the second book, *The Crimson Legion*, Denning tells of Rikus' plight to save the city of Tyr from the armies of a neighboring city-state and in the third book, *The Amber Enchantress*, Sadira is torn between the dark power of sorcery and the use of Good magic to protect the planet's fragile ecology.

Finally, we get to the focus of my column. Since Dragonlance Chronicles by Weis and Hickman, I have not believed any novels have come close to those legendary proportions until I discovered R. A. Salvatore (alias Bob Salvatore). Born in Massachusetts in 1959, he lives there still with his wife, Diane, and their three children. Bob's sophomore year in college found him holding a copy of *J.R.R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings* as a Christmas gift. Thus, a love affair had begun. He changed his major from computer science to journalism and was awarded a bachelor of science degree in Communications/Media from Fitchburg State College in 1981. He has since earned a bachelor of arts degree in English. He is now one of the most popular Forgotten Realms novel authors. His books are already on chain bookstore and newspaper best-seller lists, including the New York Times.

Bob's first novel with TSR was called the *Crystal Shard*, complete with a beautifully painted Larry Elmore cover, and was the first in The Icewind Dale trilogy set in TSR's Forgotten Realms. It exceeded my expectations. Simply put, I loved it. I anxiously awaited the next two novels, *Streams of Silver and The Halfling's Gem*.



The main characters of the Icewind Dale trilogy were an unlikely trio. There was the hardened dwarf, Bruenor Battlehammer, who was everything his name suggested, a veritable thundering battering ram with a fiery disposition around a well-hidden soft heart for those he loved. Bruenor's best friend, Drizzt Do'Urden, who has presumably proved to be TSR's second most favorite character (next to Raistlin Majere from Dragonlance), is a dark elf from the Underdark and is not to be crossed as, once goaded to combat, he is a graceful, whirling dervish with twin scimitars that would slice his opponent to pieces before he could utter "Urk?!". And the third is Wulfgar the barbarian, a giant of a man with a crushing warhammer and a blood-freezing war cry, and although his disposition was a tad primitive, his youthful soul was unfettered by the grimness of reality and his nobility exceeded that of many. Salvatore included many other characters such as Drizzt's otherworld pet, Guenhwyvar, Bruenor's adopted human daughter, Catti-brie and the always-in-trouble Regis the halfling.

All of these characters grew on me quickly and I found myself sincerely caring for each and every one of them. They became friends...my friends. When I shut the final book and had read the whole trilogy, I felt rather sullen. It was as if I had just watched a dear childhood friend move away. They had just pulled out of their driveway and coasted slowly down the street, looking back for the final time and waving goodbye.

Guess what? My friend came back to visit. Analogies are supreme, aren't they? Getting to the point, R.A. Salvatore struck again in 1990 with book one of *The Dark Elf Trilogy, Homeland*. We get to travel back to strange and exotic Menzoberranzan, the vast city

of the drow and homeland to Icewind Dale hero Drizzt Do'Urden. The young prince of a royal house, Drizzt grows to maturity in the vile world of his dark kin. Possessing honor beyond the scope of his unprincipled society, young Drizzt faces an inevitable dilemma. Can he live in a world that rejects integrity?

Homeland was followed by books two and three, Exile and Sojourn, and all three brought me back to that wonderful reverie of Salvatore's recognizable writing style. He makes you care.

Currently, Bob is working on The Cleric Quintet. Book one is entitled *Canticle*, book two is *In Sylvan Shadows* and books three, four and five are *Night Masks, The Fallen Fortress* and *The Chaos Curse*. I have so far read the first two and I am not disappointed in the slightest. Book three, *Night Masks*, is scheduled for release in August, 1992.

The biggest surprise I have encountered lately that made me smile (get your minds out of the gutter) was to learn that Bob Salvatore has brought Drizzt back once again in *The Legacy*, scheduled for release in hardcover in October, 1992. This is the first ever hardback edition novel to be published by TSR.

The Legacy opens with life being the best it had ever been for the beleaguered dark elf, Drizzt Do'Urden. His dearest friend, Bruenor, had reclaimed his throne and Wulfgar and Catti-brie were to be wed. Even Regis had returned. All were united in the safety of Mithril Hall. But Drizzt had left a powerful enemy in his wake: Lloth, the dreaded spider Queen, who vowed to take vengeance on him. Sounds like one not to be missed. I know I won't.

That about wraps it up for me this month. You've read my picks...Dragonlance, Dark Sun and R.A. Salvatore. There's just no way you can go wrong. If you pick up any of Salvatore's books and you don't like it, write to me and tell me why. If I think it's justified I'll put your letter in this column and eat the original. Seriously.

Now, go out there and get 'em!

Who's Your Favorite?

Okay, what I want to do is hold a little contest. There's nothing to be won but personal satisfaction and sated curiosity. All you readers of TSR novels (or even if you're like my friends who haven't read them but feel like you have because you've heard more than you care to), I want you to send in your top three votes for your favorite TSR character. This includes Forgotten Realms, Dragonlance, Ravenloft, Greyhawk, Dark Sun, Spelljammer and any other TSR novel. These should be in order from #1 fave to #3 fave and you can't vote for the same guy more than once. You can opt to vote for just one or two, if that is your wish. Get your votes in by August 1st, 1992, and send it to Favorite Character c/o Joe Martin, 264 Main Street, Florence, KY, 41042. When I tabulate the results I will list the Top Ten Most Popular TSR Characters in Comics Arena #3.

Here are my votes (it would help if you included which world they are from):

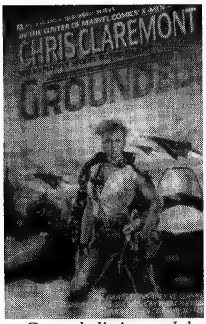
#1 Drizzt Do'Urden (of course)/ Forgotten Realms
#2 Jander Sunstar/ Ravenloft
#3 Lord Soth/ Dragonlance/ Ravenloft

Send in those votes!

GROUNDED!

A NOVEL BY CHRIS CLAREMONT!

REVIEWED BY JERRY SMITH



Grounded! A novel by Chris Claremont Ace Books, $4.95 Reviewed by Jerry Smith

Twenty years of slaving in the comics salt mines have prepared Chris Claremont well for life as a novelist., *Grounded*!, his sequel to 1988,s *FirstFlight*, again deals with the rather interesting life of Second Lieutenant Nicole Shea, United States Air Force.

In near future world of *FirstFlight*, Lt. Shea is assigned her first mission, which becomes much more than a simple search and explore job. Before they're done, Nicole and her X-Men-like crew fight a confederation of murderous space bandits, make first contact with a feline alien race, and establish diplomatic relations with that race. In *Grounded*!, Nicole finds her wings clipped when her flight status is revoked due to an unfavorable psychological profile. Seems the events of her first flight have shaken her up a bit too much for another command of her own.

Massively disappointed, Nicole resigns herself to life grounded on Edwards Air Force Base. She makes fast friends with several members of the Cobri family, the modern equivalent of the Medici family in ancient Italy. Like the Medicis, the Cobris are a rich, brilliant bunch, heavily involved in everything from computers to mining operations. Alex Cobri, the oldest, is working for the government on a Virtual Reality program so realistic the operator can't distinguish computer from reality. Amy Cobri, living with her brother on the base, forms an instant bond with the older Nicole. Manuel Cobri, the patriarch of the family, is more of a felt presence in the book than actually there. His actions and power are alive, and he envelops the novel like a ghost without showing up until the final pages.

Claremont has grown leaps and bounds as a writer since *FirstFlight*. While an excellent read, the book was too reminiscent of his work on Marvel's *X-Men*. *FF* has it's Wolverine character, it's Storm character, etc. The characters speak in constant Claremontisms, things like "Take me, body and soul", "no quarter asked, none given", and my favorite, "I give as good as I get". In *Grounded*!, Claremont uses his comics writing as a strength. The dialogue is crisp and terse. It's actually fun to read. His plot is much tighter than *FF*, and the subplot about someone trying to murder Nicole is resolved beautifully and shockingly. You hardly know it's there til it explodes in your face. Much like Claremont's writing on this book.

While wrapping up almost all of its numerous storylines, *Grounded*! does leave the story open for another volume in the story of Lt. Nicole Shea. Claremont keeps getting better, and he has finally learned how to tell a coherent story with a beginning, middle, and end. Claremont's comic writing has given me unlimited pleasure over the years, but if his next novel is as good as this one, I don't care if he ever goes back to comics.

BLUE LINE ANNOUNCED

Get Published!

C O N T E S T

Blue Line products have caught on and are still growing since their debut product, Blue Line Comic Book Pages, was released in February of 1991. Since that time, over 150,000 pages have been sold internationally. And Blue Line has also released a second product, Blue Line Concept Sketch Pages which are also doing quite well.

The distributor of these products, Sky Comics, is collaborating with Blue Line in sponsoring a contest entitled *The Blue Line "Get Published" Contest.* The name is pretty self-explanatory, however for technicalities' sake, this is a competition aimed at giving an amateur artist and Blue Line user a chance to have their work published in an actual comic book.

The contest begins June 1st and will run until October 15th. Upon the expiration date a winner will be picked by various members of the Sky Comics staff. The winner will be contacted by Sky Comics and their story will be scheduled for publication (probably in early 1993)!! The story must be a complete (drawn, inked & lettered) twenty pages in length and collaboration among persons on the creative chores is highly suggested by Sky Comics and Blue Line. More than one submission is accepted considering the more practice one gets the better he/she becomes. Submit copies only! Also, the front cover of the Blue Line pack purchased must be included with the submission. Specially marked packs of Blue Line products will begin shipping in June.

Terms and conditions can be acquired by purchasing Blue Line products, in various advertisements or by sending an SASE to *Sky Comics, 264 Main Street, Florence, KY 41042.*

SKY COMICS

HEROIC PUBLISHING

ANNOUNCES RESULTS OF 1991 READER SURVEY

Votes cast in Heroic Publishing's 1991 Reader Survey have been tabulated, and in the category of favorite character, the winner is no surprise. Flare is the most popular by far. She received a total of 208 votes, more than twice as many as the next character's 85. According to the results of this survey, fandom's top five favorite Heroic characters include:

1. Flare 208
2. Lady Arcane 85
3. Foxbat 46
4. Icicle 41
5. The Marksman 34

Other characters who received a significant number of fan votes include Rose, the Black Enchantress, Giant, Icestar, the Tigress, the Galloping Galooper, and Madame Synn. In this second tier of voter preference, the most surprising result was the continuing popularity of Giant, a character who died several years ago, yet still appears to have a loyal and vocal following.

The voter preferences revealed in this year's survey will help guide Heroic Publishing in the development of new projects at least through the end of 1992. Five years ago, it was a similar reader survey that first revelaed Flare's growing popularity with comic book fans, and led directly into the development of Flare's own magazine. These are the plans Heroic Publishing has to make use of their most popular characters during the course of the next several months:

Interestingly, Lady Arcane and Icicle, who stand in second and fourth place in terms of fan popularity, were already on tap to receive their own magazines. The first issues of both are currently scheduled to ship in May. Lady Arcane will also continue to appear regularly in Flare, and Icicle in the League of Champions.

The Marksman, who stands in fifth place, will be featured in a series of solo stories running through several issues of Hero's flagship title, The League of Champions, including a cover slot on *League of Champions #5*. Fan reaction to those stories will determine whether or not the Marksman's own title will be revived.

Rose and The Black Enchantress will be appearing regularly in Lady Arcane's magazine, Rose in her own stories, the Black Enchantress as part of Lady Arcane's supporting cast. The Black Enchantress will also be crossing over into various issues ot Icicle, including a cover appearance on *Icicle #3*.

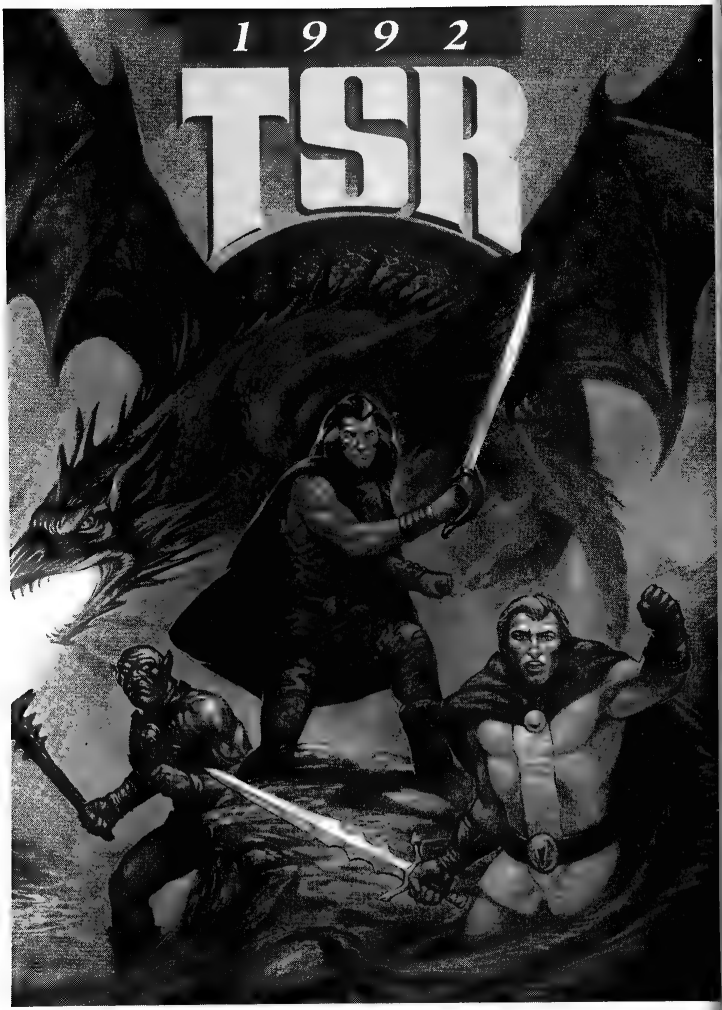
Foxbat and Giant will for the time being, be seen only in issues of Hero's reprint magazine, *Champions Classics*. There, the original story from the original Champions mini-series is in the process of being retold for the benefit of new readers who have never seen who the Hero Graphics universe began.

Icestar will have a solo story in *League of Champions #4*, and will be seen as a strong supporting character in virtually every issue of Icicle.

The savage Tigress returns for a rematch with Flare in the two issue *Flare VS the Tigress* mini-series. That mini-series will, if all goes well, lead directly into the debut of the Tigress's own magazine.

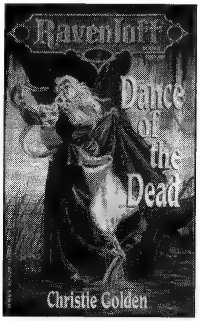
There has been talk of a Galloping Galooper mini-series, to be written by Andrew M. Robinson, the creator of the Galooper. Thus far, that project is only in the talking stage. In the meantime, the story that introduced the Galooper is to be reprinted in this year's *Flare Annual*.

Finally, Madame Synn and her group of villainous Enemies will be the focus of conflict for the League of Champions as that series moves back full swing in the aftermath of this summer's crossover with the *Southern Knights*.


1992
TSR

TSR
SUMMER RELEASES

Goblin's Lair Adventure Pack
Boxed Set
On Sale Date: July



Dance of the Dead
Ravenloft Novel by
Christie Golden
On Sale Date: July

Aurora's Whole Realms Catalogue
Forgotten Realms
Accessory
by Ed Greenwood
On Sale Date: July

The Cataclysm: Tales II, Volume Two
Dragonlance Novel by
various authors
On Sale Date: July

Dragonlance Boxed Set
by Terra & Johnson
On Sale Date: July

Treasures of Greyhawk
Greyhawk Accessory
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Wizard's Challenge
AD&D Module
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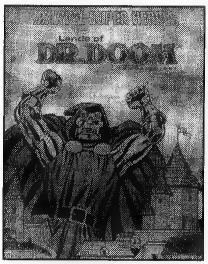
Charlemagnes' Paladins
Campaign Sourcebook
AD&D Accessory
by Ken Rolston
On Sale Date: July



Lands of Dr. Doom
Marvel Boxed Set
by Herring and Davis
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by Dale Henson
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Dragon #182
Amazing Stories #571

Wrath of the Immortals
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1992 Series, Part Two
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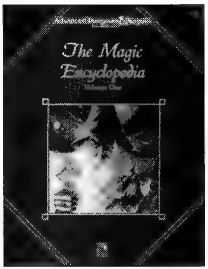
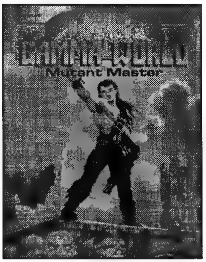


The Magic Encyclopedia, Volume One
AD&D Accessory
by Connie & Slade Henson
On Sale Date: August



Mutant Master
Gamma World Module
by Bruce Nesmith
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Dragon #183

Dungeon #66

Amazing Stories #572

Sun Wars

TSR Board Game
by R. Borg
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The Nine Gates
TSR Novel
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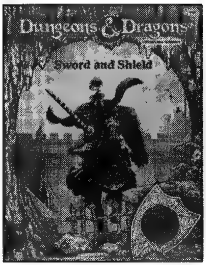

Sword and Shield
D&D Module
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The Milenian Empire
D&D Accessory
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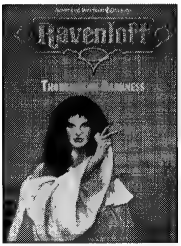

Thoughts of Darkness
Ravenloft Module
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Forgotten Realms Novel
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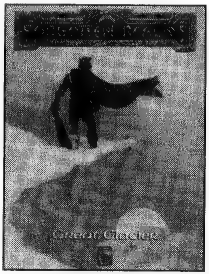

Great Glacier
Forgotten Realms
Accessory
by Rick Swan
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Steel and Stone: The Meetings Sextet, Vol. Five
Dragonlance Novel
by Ellen Porath
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AD&D Sourcebox
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MU 8, 1992
Character Updates
On Sale Date: September

Dragon #184
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Convention Specials

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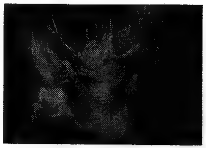

ATTENTION!
GAMING FANS!

We're looking for editorial cartoons pertaining to amusing gaming situations. If you want to submit samples we will run them in the gaming section (which should get more and more comprehensive with each issue). Single panels are preferred but strips are welcome. Send your cartoons/ illustrations to:

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Introducing: Wizards of the Coast

by Lisa Stevens
(WotC Editor-in-Chief)

Who are we, you ask? Well, let me introduce ourselves. We are Wizards of the Coast, Inc., or WotC to our friends. Thanks to our good friend Mr. Stephen Michael Sechi, WotC now has the license to produce products in the Talislanta line and will do our best to make Talislanta the number one game on the market.

So what's up with Talislanta? Lots. First off, Stevè has taken Talislanta twenty years into the future. Much has changes and many of you, like Tamerlin, may not recognize parts of a once-familiar world. But I'm sure you will find this new Talislanta to be just as intriguing, if not more so, than the one with which you are familiar. Steve and game designer Jonathan Tweet have put their fertile minds to the task of making Talislanta even better and we think that the results are going to be worth waiting for.

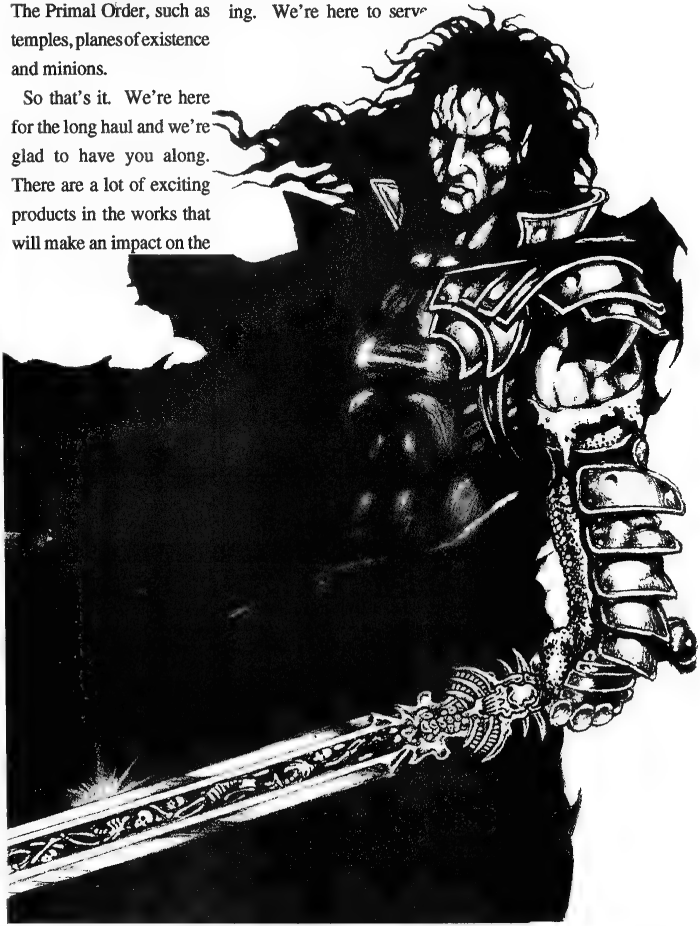
We have all kinds of things in store for you with Talislanta. Our first release in this line is actually a co-release: the Talislanta Guidebook, third edition (now available), and an anthology of short stories appropriately titled Tales of Talislanta. Down the line, we have lots to look forward to. Jonathan Tweet is writing the first official Talislanta adventure, Scent of the Beast (now available), which is also going to be a series of adventures that follow the plot of the Sub-Men uprising introduced in the Guidebook. Another long awaited product is the full-color map of Talislanta. We have commissioned the renowned cartographer Eric Holtz (of Harn'tm' map fame) to do the Talislanta map (now available). Further down the line, we are going to be releasing an updated Sorcerer's Guide. We also have a bestiary of the Unknown Lands ready to go and plan to explore the Unknown Lands more in future products. In short, rest assured that we will be filling out the Talislantan milieu with frequent, high quality products.

We plan on covering other things in addition to Talislanta. This will begin with our other product line, the Primal line, and expand as we develop other products. The flagship product for Wizards of the Coast is a capsystem called The Primal Order. So what is the Primal Order? Basically, it is a capsystem designed to allow game players to introduce deities into any game system. The Primal Order can be used with any genre that allows the existence of deities. Follow-on

products for The Primal Order include adventures, fully developed deities, and other products going into more detail on various aspects of The Primal Order, such as temples, planes of existence and minions.

So that's it. We're here for the long haul and we're glad to have you along. There are a lot of exciting products in the works that will make an impact on the gaming industry. Please don't hesitate to tell us what you think of any of our products or about products you might be interested in seeing. We're here to serve you, our customers, and we want to know what you think.

Great gaming!



TOY NEWS

G.I. JOE IS BACK!

G.I. Joe Turns Twenty-Eight This Month!

It was June of 1964. A special month for many of us although we may not be aware of it. It was the debut of what would later become the greatest toy soldier of our generation, "America's Movable, Fighting Man," G.I. Joe!

At the New York Toy Fair in 1964, Americans got their first glimpse of Stan Weston's creation. It was with the aid of Hasbro executive, Donald Levine, that this concept of an all-American hero soon became a reality. Toy designers, Sam Speera and Hubert P. O'Conner, finalized this idea in concrete detail.

This first G.I. Joe was a synthesis of the composites of twenty medal of honor winners. An imminent scar on his right cheek distinguished him as a true warrior while his eyes and facial features were of an amicable nature. He had twenty-one movable parts, fully articulate, so that this soldier could be placed in an array of battle-action poses. Standing close to one foot tall, the first G.I. Joe was the perfect toy soldier.

The debut of this line featured four basic figures representing the four branches of the U.S. military. The boxes contained a basic figure dressed in service fatigues with his cap, dog tag, jump boots, field manual, service insignia decals and a four-color fold-out cata

Pictured above are the new 12" GI Joes from Hasbro. They are: (left-right) Duke ™, Cobra Commander ™, Stalker ™, and Snake Eyes ™.

log sheet. This sheet showcased the accessory sets and other equipment made available for 1964.

In 1965, the first black G.I. Joe was born and the "Moto-Rev" Five Star Combat Jeep.

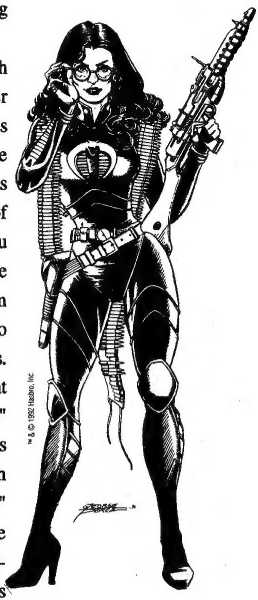
In 1966, Hasbro introduced six WWII Soldiers. G.I. Joe now had acquired four allies to help with the cause. More importantly, however, G.I. met his very first adversaries from the Axis powers. Also, in 1966, came The Green Beret Figure. This hero of modern warfare came displayed in a window box dressed in jungle fatigues, beret, M-16, a 45 pistol and holster, web belt and field radio. The line of vehicles for G.I. Joe expanded, too, in 1966 with the addition of the Mercury Space Capsule and The Frogman and Sea Sled Set.

1967, G.I. Joe was at the height of his popularity and Hasbro had released the talking G.I. Joe Action Soldier as well as the three other branch figures. Pull the dogtag and the soldier would issue one of eight different commands. Also in 1967, we saw the release of the first female G.I. Joe, the G.I. Nurse.

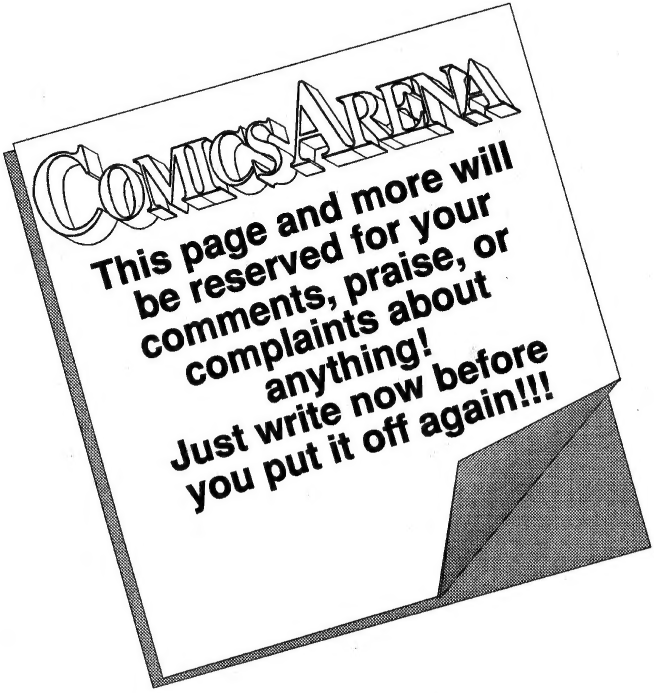
In 1968, came the "Photo Box Sets", thirty-five Joe sets re-released.

In 1969, we were treated to a non-combative line entitled "The Adventures of G.I. Joe". This line included G.I. Joe Adventurer (black or white), Talking Astronaut and Aquanaut.

Those who grew up with G.I. Joe may remember these great action figures with a downright sincere reverance. Truly, he was the greatest toy soldier of our time. For those of you who may not care for the smaller figures, or like them all, you'll be delighted to know a little bit of news. Apparently, with the recent success of the limited 12" Duke figure, Hasbro has given the go-ahead with plans for three more 12" fully poseable figures in the new Hall Of Fame assortment. Look for new figures of the Cobra Commander, Stalker and Snake Eyes. Each of these will come equipped with electronic light and sound weapons and authentic battle garb! It looks as if the G.I. Joe era has endured for twenty-eight years this month. Happy Birthday, Joe! Here's to another twenty-eight!



YOUR LETTERS!
WE HOPE!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The SEEKER

by Joe Martin, Willie Peppers & Alan Freeman.

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